1:Curzon E 1,5 (no date) 1907 Art Khasi Art

147 villages, such as Shella, Borpunji, Umniuh, and in Narpuh in
132 the Jaintia Hills.
361

Origin.

173 The origin of the Khasis is a very vexed question. Although it is probable that the Khasis have inhabited their present abode for at any rate a considerable period, there seems to be a fairly general belief amongst them that they originally came from elsewhere. The Rev. H. Roberts, in the introduction to his Khasi Grammar, states that "tradition, such as it is, connects them politically with the Burmese, to whose king they were up to a comparatively recent date rendering homage, by sending him an annual tribute in the shape of an axe, as an emblem merely of submission." Another tradition points out the north as the direction from which they migrated, and Sylhet as the terminus of their wanderings, from which they were ultimately driven back into their present hill fastnesses by a great flood, after a more or less peaceful occupation of that district. It was on the occasion of this great flood, the legend runs, that the Khasi lost the art of writing, the Khasi losing his book whilst he was swimming at the time of this flood, whereas the Bengali [212] managed to preserve his. Owing to the Khasis having possessed no written character before the advent of the Welsh missionaries, there are no histories as is the case with the Ahoms of the Assam Valley, and therefore no record of their journeys.
114 Mr. Shadwell, the oldest living authority we have on the
173 Khasis, and one who has been in close touch with the people for more than half a century, mentions a tradition amongst them that they originally came into Assam from Burma *viâ* the Patkoi range, having followed the route of one of the Burmese invasions. Mr. Shadwell has heard them mention the name Patkoi as a hill they met with on their journey. All this sort of
144 thing is, however, inexpressibly vague. In the chapter dealing
173 with "Affinities" have been given some reasons for supposing that the Khasis and other tribes of the Mon-Anam family, originally occupied a large portion of the Indian continent. Where the actual cradle of the Mon-Anam race was, is as

764 As mentioned before, these stones are not gravestones, they are
769 shaped, both the vertical and the horizontal stones, remarkably like
211 the pictures of *menhirs* and *dolmens* that appear in Fergussons's work on rude stone monuments. It is a remarkable fact that Dalton mentions the existence of apparently very similar memorial stones in certain *Ho* and *Munda* villages in Chota Nagpur, and there is a drawing to be found at page 52 of Yule's Embassy to the Court of Ava of a cromlech which is apparently very like the cromlechs or *mawkynthei* to be met with every day in these hills. It is most unfortunate that the
[212] Khasis, owing to their want of a written language in former days, possess no written accounts of these stones, and that the Khasis of the present day are so very vague in their ideas about them, for I am inclined to believe that the proper elucidation of this question of memorial stones may prove to be the key to the origin of these people. I therefore strongly advise that a very careful search be made for similar stones, such as I have described, in other parts of India. It is possible that the Khasis may have found monoliths erected by some prehistoric race when they arrived in the Khasi Hills, and they may have adopted the custom of erecting memorial stones by the force of example, but the use of such stones seems to fit in with the Khasi system of ancestor worship, and it is remarkable that the shapes of the stones should be so very similar to those which exist in England, Ireland and Brittany, and I believe also in Denmark and Scandinavia. Is the custom of erecting such memorial stones in any way connected with people practising the matriarchate? The whole subject is a deeply interesting one, and I hope that it may be possible to throw some light on it.

784 13. *Taboo.*—The Khasis have an elaborate system of *seng*, or taboo. There are very many different kinds of *seng*, but some of them are the following :—

Special taboo, at time of pregnancy.—(*a*) It is *seng* for a pregnant woman to accompany a funeral procession.

(*b*) It is *seng* for a woman in the first stage of pregnancy to finish any sewing which she may have commenced before she became *enceinte*. There is a similar prohibition regarding the finishing of the plaiting of wicker baskets.

(*c*) It is *seng* for the husband of a pregnant woman to thatch the ridge of the roof of a house at such a time.

(*d*) It is *seng* under similar circumstances to fix an axe or a *dao* in a handle.

Ordinary taboos.—(i) It is *seng* to build a house with stone walls on all four sides.

16: McCormack E-4 5 (1954-1958) 1964
[P. 106A] AR7 Khasi AR7

group of matrilineal and Mon-Khmer-speaking people who claim as their ancestral homeland the present-day United Khasi-Jaintia Hills District (within approximately 90° 47′ and 92° 52′ E. and 25° 5′ and 26° 5′ N.). This group includes the Jaintias (also Pnar or Synteng) in the southeast, who differ from the Khasis primarily in their duolocal residence pattern and less virulent forms of sorcery. (The Hadem in eastern Jaintia are a Kuki people.) It also includes the Lyngngams (also spelled Lynngam) in the west, who practice migratory swidden agriculture and certain peculiar funerary rites, and are said by Ehrenfels (1955) to be culturally intermediate between Khasis and Garos. Finally, it includes Bhois, Wars, and upland Khasis, which terms are primarily territorial. Bhoi country is the north-central part of the District, and is culturally complicated by the presence of Mikirs, Lalungs, and Nepalis. War country spans the entire southern length of the District, so that Wars divide into Jaintia Wars and Khasi Wars; of these, the Khasi Wars have traditionally transmitted property to sons as well as to daughters. The upland center of the District is the country of the Khasis proper, those whose culture provides the most useful model for interpreting the variations found elsewhere. [For general reference on all categories of Khasi culture, cf. Costa 1936 and 1937; also Gurdon 1907, especially for data on regional variations.] **Geography.** The District is 5,554 square miles of hilly tableland, intricately dissected by numerous rivers, and marked by significant ecological variation over very short distances. The tablelands step gently downward north from Shillong Peak, which at 6,445 feet is the highest point in the District, and over about 55 miles ease into the Brahmaputra valley where this is some 250 feet above sea level. To the south, the land slopes more steeply downward for about 20 miles, and then drops abruptly, in cliff and steep-slope formations, to the Ganges sea-level delta that begins at its north with Sylhet. The annual southwest monsoons drop torrential rains around Cherrapunji and Mawryuram villages (for Cherrapunji, a record 805 inches in 1861), but then, reaching Shillong 33 miles to the northeast, provide only about 100 inches per year. Rainfall is again greater in Bhoi, which shares the Brahmaputra valley climate. Climate is temperate on the high Shillong plateau, where it seldom freezes and never snows. To the north, climate becomes subtropical, forest is jungly, and fauna abound. The climate to the south is also subtropical. [Cf. Hooker 1891: chap. XXIX.] **Linguistic affiliation.** Khasi is one of the major Mon-Khmer languages, related to Mon, Khmer, Semang-Sakai, Nicobarese, and Palaung-Wa. The major Khasi dialects are Khasi, Jaintia, and Lyngngam, to which Grierson adds War. Further minor variations occur from village to village. The Khasis had no script until 1842, when the roman alphabet was successfully applied to the Cherrapunji dialect of Khasi proper. [Cf. Rabel 1961; Grierson 1903-28: 2; Bareh 1962.]

101
131
197
101
184
162
563
591
154
241
764
119
[428]
[113]
133
[131]
132
[113]
197
[212]
[113]

19: Assam G-5 (1958) 1963 A87 Khasi A87

CHAPTER—X

Summary of main findings

10.1. Twenty-eight villages were selected for the purpose of the survey. Out of the 28 villages selected, 10 from Border area and 8 from Project area were selected purposively while the remaining 10 were selected at random from the entire district which is referred hereafter as general area.

Migration from big villages was rare but some migration was reported in respect of small villages.

Occurrence of Malaria, influenza and dysentery is a regular phenomenon in the area. Medical facilities were not found satisfactory and as much as 78 per cent of the villages have no dispensary within a radius of five miles. In regard to education, the facilities cannot also be said to be considerably for more than 40 per cent of the villages have a Lower Primary School. Transport facilities were are unsatisfactory and as much as 86 per cent of the villages still depend upon primitive mode of transport, namely head load. Correlated with unsatisfactory form of transport, is the prevalence of unduly high cost of transport.

10.2. The number of the families assessed by the survey was 1000 in the Border area, and 844 in the Project area and 1156 in the General area. The average size of a village in the respective area is 1004, 809 and 1044 families. In the Border and Project areas females out number males being respectively 1048 and 1001 females per 1,000 males as against 940 females per 1,000 males in the general area. Literacy is as high as 34 per cent in the border area and 31 per cent in the Project area but as low as 17 per cent in the general area. In all the areas literacy among females is very low.

The working population (earners and earning dependents) is as high as 53 per cent in the Border area, 54 per cent in the Project area and 53 per cent in the general area. While there were no cases of unemployment in the Project and General areas, 53 persons were reported unemployed from border area.

10.3. 51 per cent of the families in Border area are wholly agricultural, 38 per cent partly agricultural and 11 per cent independent of agriculture. The corresponding figure for the Project area are 61, 31 and 8 per cent respectively while for the General area they are 58 per cent, 39 per cent, 3 per cent respectively.

Predominantly agricultural families constitute 61, 76 and 80 per cent of the families in Border, Project and General areas respectively.

10.4. 31 per cent of the families in Border area, 38 per cent in Project area and 10 per cent in General area were absolutely without any land while 35 per cent, 31 per cent and 24 per cent of the families in the respective areas possessed small holding ranging from 0.01 to 2.50 acres representing 11.34 and 36 per cent of the total holding area in the respective areas. 34 per cent of the families in Border and Project areas and 61 in General area possessed medium sized holding (2.5 to less than 10 acres)

29: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR? Khasi AR?

sonant) or juxtapositions of roots which have not thereby suffered either abbreviation or absorption—that is to say, they are all, with a few exceptions, reducible to their constituent root words, which are still "current coin," and retain their power as independent vocables. The cases in which abbreviation and "fusion" of roots have taken place are confined to—(1) the noun prefix *jing*, expressing abstract ideas; (2) the verbal prefixes *kyn*, *kyn*, *kyn*, *syn*, *syn*, *syn*, *kyn*, *kyn*, *kyn*, *kyn*, *syn*, *kyn*, expressing causation, intransitiveness, and reciprocity. The language is found purest at Cherra Punji. The Khásás have no written character or literature of any kind of their own. Tradition says that all was lost while they were yet western of the plains, whence they were driven by a general catastrophe or deluge to their present fastnesses in the hills. The following works on the language have been published: *Khási Grammar*, *Anglo-Khási Dictionary*, *Khási Primer* (Parts I. and II., with Vocabulary),—all issued by the Calcutta School-Book Society; *Khási English Dictionary* (in preparation), and an *Anglo-Khási First Book*.

197 193 212 • 193 113

"CUSTOMS REGARDING INHERITANCE.—A Khásid, whether married or single, if he makes his mother's house his home, is said to be *rammy kur* his *kur*, *i.e.* for his mother, or his brothers and sisters, or his mother's relatives. On his death his property goes to his mother, if living; if not, to the grandmother; if she is not living, then to his sisters; should his sisters also be dead, to his sisters' children. Should the deceased have left no sisters, the property goes to the brothers; should he have no brothers or should they be dead, the property descends to his aunts, or to their children if the aunts are not living; should the aunts have left no children, the property descends to the grandmother's or great grandmother's sisters or children. The property of a female on her death goes to her mother, if the deceased have no children; or if the mother of the deceased is not living, the property goes to the brothers and sisters; if the sisters are dead, then their children become the heirs. If there are no such children, the property devolves as in the case of males. When a man is not living in his mother's house, but in that of his wife, he earns for his wife and children. On his death his property descends to his wife, with the exception of the ornaments and clothing worn by him during his lifetime, which go to the brothers and sisters or other relatives of the deceased. Should the deceased have been a widower, the property goes to his children, and in their absence

428

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

697 In addition, a total of Rs. 899 (£89, 18s.) was expended on jail buildings. The manufacturing account shows cash receipts amounting to Rs. 60, against an expenditure of Rs. 29, or a net profit of Rs. 31 (£3, 2s).

797 871 648 EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS.—The management of education in the Khási and Jáintiá Hills is entirely in the hands of the Welsh Calvinistic Mission, who first established themselves in the District about the year 1844. Though the Khásiás are naturally dull, and children are taken away from school before they have obtained more than a smattering of instruction, yet the perseverance of the missionaries has been rewarded by most satisfactory results. It is stated, in the Report of the Inspector of Schools for Assam for 1874-75, that 'a much larger proportion of the Khásiás know a little of reading, writing, and arithmetic than is the case, probably, in any other [562] District of either Assam or Bengal.' Female education, owing to the interest taken in this work by the wives of the missionaries, is also in a comparatively advanced condition. The missionary schools are largely subsidized by grants in aid from Government. The [212] teaching is conducted in English and in Khási, the Roman character being used in both cases.

The following paragraphs are compiled from the Education Report for 1874-75, above referred to. In that year the total number of schools open in the District was 73, attended by 1666 pupils. As compared with the area and the population, these figures show one school to every 84·34 square miles, and one pupil to every 85 inhabitants. As compared with the total number of males under ten years of age, the number of boys only attending school (1322) shows one scholar to every 13·1. The total expenditure on education in the same year was Rs. 17,722. 11. 3, or £1772, 5s. 5d.; towards which Government contributed Rs. 10,443. 2, fees and fines produced Rs. 228. 5. 3, while the remainder (Rs. 7051. 4) was expended by the Missionary Society from its own funds. The average cost of educating each pupil was Rs. 10. 10. 4, or £1, 1s. 3½d.

648 797 872 PRIMARY SCHOOLS.—With the exception of the schools at Cherrá Púnjí, Jowái, Shillong, and Shellá, all the schools in the Hills may properly be classed as primary, though several are returned as middle vernacular schools. On this principle the total number of primary schools is 64, in 45 of which a little English is taught. These 64 schools had 1226 pupils on their rolls at the close of the year 1874-75, and an average daily attendance of 829, comparing